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Family Law, by Professor Geldart; and Book V, Succession, by Mr. Holdsworth.

A Digest is, in our law, a collection of decisions with more or less expository statement. It might be asked why, in view of Lord Halsbury's complete and helpful collection of decisions, "The Laws of England," this partial collection should be made. It might be asked why so novel a division of the law should be adopted. It might be loudly demanded what possible use there can be in reducing a complex and delicately shaded body of doctrine like the law into a collection of disjointed dogmas, elementary, so simple as to be misleading, so placid as to be deadly dull. Is this that "general view of the law as a complete whole" which some old-fashioned legal educators urge as desirable?

Given the plan, the execution is on the whole, of course, excellent. One can get a fairly good notion of the principal heads of a portion of the law by a study of the table of contents, supplemented by reading the text. But in some cases brevity becomes misleading. Under the section "Self-Help" it is said: "A person . . . whose possession is wrongfully interfered with, is justified in employing, against the wrong-doer, force apparently necessary to prevent the accomplishment or continuance of that . . . interference," thus leading one to suppose that one may kill, if necessary, to prevent a trespass on land; and "A person entitled to the possession of a chattel may seize it, by force if necessary," thus allowing an invasion by force of the peaceful possession of an innocent purchaser from a thief. The first of these errors is corrected later (p. 436), but the second remains uncorrected, except for a caution in a note (*ibid.*). As an example of brevity that dodges difficulties, the whole law of agency, so far as liability to third persons is concerned, is contained in seven and one half lines (p. 55). The words "cause," "consequence," "proximate," "remote" are not found in the index. There is no general treatment of the Conflict of Laws, nor does the work contain any discussion of such questions as what law governs the obligation of a contract, what power a foreign executor or administrator may have, or what recognition will be given to a foreign marriage where one or both parties were aliens. The law of legitimacy is stated as if no question of the legitimacy of an alien could arise in an English court.

An examination of this book confirms the idea that any attempt briefly to make the law simple, easy, or complete is foredoomed to failure.

J. H. BEALE.

SPECULATION AND GAMBLING IN OPTIONS, FUTURES, AND STOCKS IN ILLINOIS.

By James C. McMath. Chicago: George I. Jones. 1921. pp. xxxvi. 70.

This little book does not purport to be anything more than an outline of the law of gambling contracts with special reference to Illinois law, more especially as affecting transactions in grain futures and stocks. As such it will doubtless be of service to lawyers in the handling of cases involving such transactions. To this end it contains in the front an alphabetical index, or rather digest, with frequent references to the leading cases, text-books, and legal periodicals, and less frequent references to the text of the book itself. As the author takes care to point out, many references are to be found in this index-digest which are not to be found elsewhere in the book. In addition there is in the back of the book an appendix containing the Illinois statutes on the subject, together with an alphabetical list of Illinois cases and occasional reference to notes and articles in legal periodicals. The text itself is inclined to the platitudinous and adds little or nothing to the subject from the point of view of the student. On the whole one must regret that the author could not take the time to work his material into the concise and learned essay which the subject needs and deserves.

C. A. M.